

Preached A new
SERMON

Against the

ARTISCRIBTURISTS.

ALSO

Another concerning the

Sinfulness, Danger, and Remedies

OF

INFIDELITY.

Preached at

WHITE-HALL.

BY

SETH Lord Bishop of *Sarum.*

LONDON,

Printed by J. M. for James Collins, at the
Kings-Head in Westminster-Hall,
MDC LXX.

GREEN

DEPT. OF AGRICULTURE

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

WASHINGTON, D. C.

1917

Against the
ANTI-SCRIPTURISTS.
A
SERMON

Preached at
WHITE-HALL,

Febrary 20. 16⁶⁹₇₀.

BY
SETH Lord Bishop of *Sarum.*

Printed by His Majesties Special Command.

LONDON,
Printed by J. M. for James Collins, at the
Kings-Head in *Westminster-Hall*,
MDC LXX.

xi
C
ly

M
w
C
a
of
m
to
ch
ge
ce



2 Tim. 3. 16.

All Scripture is given by Inspiration of God.

IN the *verse* preceding, it is said concerning the *Scriptures* of the *Old Testament*, that they are able to make a man wise unto salvation, *διὰ πίστεως Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ* (by the faith which is in Jesus Christ) : And it follows immediately, *All Scripture, &c.*

ἡ πίστις (the Faith) is often by a Metonymy taken for the *Gospel*, which is the *Object* of the *Faith* of Christians. We read often of the ^a *Preaching*, and ^b *Hearing* of Faith ; ^c of the *Analogue* of Faith, ^d the *common Faith* ^e which was once delivered to the Saints (in the preaching of ^f Christ, and the *Writings* of his *Evangelists* and *Apostles*) and so I conceive it is to be taken in this place.

A 3

So

Against the

So that the meaning of the whole is this, The Old Testament understood and expounded according to the Analogy of the New, is able to make a man wise. And the Pen-men of the Canonical Books of the Old Testament (wherein Timothy had been instructed *in scripturis*) and of the Books of the New Testament (which except those of S. John were extant before the writing of this Epistle) were inspired and directed by the spirit of God.

The words of the Text are an entire Proposition , asserting the Divine Authority of the Canon of Scripture ; and my endeavour shall be at this time to prove the truth of that Proposition. Wherein, that I may proceed with all plainness and clearness, I shall premise two words by way of { Petition,
 { Precaution.

I. *By way of Petition, I suppose and take for granted;*

1. The great *principle* of the power of God, and his *providence* in governing the world.
2. That *our Body of Canonical Books*

Anti-Scripturists.

7

Books of the Old Testament, is the same with that which was in Use in the time of Christ and his Apostles, And our body of the New Testament the same which was anciently received in the Church. So that what shall be proved of those, is applicable to the Original Scripture used in our time.

3. *That those Books of New Testament whose Authors were not anciently questioned, were Written by those Authors whose Name they bear. And that those few others which were sometimes questioned by some particular Churches, and afterward Universally received, contain in them no one point of Faith or Manners dissentient from the Contents of those Books which were never questioned.*

2. *By way of Precaution and Admonition I must intreat you to take notice, that I shall not now meddle with*

the Controversies concerning *Apo-crypha, Translations, Keri and Chetib, Hebrew points, various Lectiōns, dubious Authors or parts of Scripture.*

But my endeavour at this time shall be to *Affert* the *Divine Authority* of the *body and substance* of the *Original Books* of the *Canon* of the *Old and New Testament*: And this not in the way of *common place*, but in a particular *Examination* or *Refutation* of the most dangerous *Opinions* of the *Anti-scripturists*, which are these.

I. Of those who pretend to believe the *truth* of the *New Testament*, and yet they deny the *Divine Authority* of the *Old*.

II. Of those who pretend to believe the *truth*, but deny the *divine Authority* of the *New Testament*.

III. Of such as pretend to believe *matters of fact* to have been truly *related* in the *New Testament*, but do not believe the *truth* of the *Doctrinal* parts relating to *Faith* and *Manners*.

IV. Such as *deny* the *truth* of the *Relation* of *matters of Fact* in the
New

New Testament, and in consequence reject the whole Body of Scripture. Of these as briefly and plainly as I can.

I. The first Opinion is of those, who pretending to believe the Truth of the New Testament, deny the Divine Authority of the Old Testament. The Severians, and the Manichees, Basilides, and Carpocrates of old: The Catapultists of later times, some Anabaptists, Antinomians, and other Fanatical Sectaries amongst our selves.

In opposition to these, I shall shew, that supposing the truth of the New Testament, the Divine Authority of the Old Testament is to be acknowledged: Because the Divine Authority of the Old Testament is asserted by Christ and his Evangelists and Apostles in the New.

I. Next to the Redemption of the world, the great business which Christ had to do upon Earth, was to convince men that he was the Messiah, and so to assert his Legislative Authority. And the great Argument which he used

used for the conviction of the world was this.

All the *Marks* and the entire *Character* of the Messiah, and of his Actions and Passions, were *prefigured* and *foretold* by the *Law* and the *Prophets*, and the *Psalms*, i. e. in the *Volume* of the *Old Testament*.

And *all things* foretold or prefigured concerning the Messiah, were accomplished by *himself*.

So that though the *great Works* of Christ, and the *purity* and excellency of his *Doctrine*, and of his *Life* were of themselves *sufficient* to *justify* the Introduction of his *Law* into the World, yet he was pleased to resolve (as it were) his own Authority into the *Divine Authority* of the *Old Testament*, and to make use of those other manifestations of himself, in a co-ordination with that principle.

And *therefore* we find him still *pressing* the *Jews* with this, *that* if they did *believe* the *Writings* of *Moses*, and their other *Scriptures*, they must of necessity believe *him* also.

Joh. 5. 46. *Moses* wrote of me (saith he) where-

wherefore, did ye believe *Moses*, ye would believe *me*. The *Scriptures* testify of me, therefore search them diligently, ἐπιურᾶτε τὰς γραφάς. For the attaining of everlasting life he refers the Lawyer to the Law, *What is written in the Law? how readest thou?* For the avoiding of the place of torments, he makes *Abraham* refer the Relations of *Dives* to *Moses* and the Prophets.

Joh. 5. 39.

Luk. 10. 26

Luk. 16. 29

In all his *Disputations* with the Pharisees and Sadduces, the Lawyers and the Scribes, he makes his appeal to the *Scriptures* of the Old Testament. And lest any one should think that in all this he did only argue *ad homines* (that disputing with the Jews he only proceeded upon their own Hypothesis) we find him in the course of his Ministration positively asserting, that the *Scriptures* must be fulfilled; that they cannot be broken; that he came not to destroy the Law and the Prophets, but to fulfill them; and that Heaven and Earth shall pass away, before one jot or tittle of these should perish, until all

Mar. 14. 49

Joh. 10. 35

Mar. 3. 31.

Mar. 5. 18.

was

was fulfilled. Thus he asserted the Authority of the Old Testament before his death.

And after his *Resurrection* he made a real demonstration that the Old Testament was given by inspiration of God; for *on the day* of his Resurrection, falling into company of two of his Disciples, going to *Em-*
 Luk. 24. 27 *maus* : He began at *Moses* and all the *Prophets*, and expounded to them *in all the Scriptures* the things concerning himself.

And afterward when the Eleven were come together, as a *recapitulation of this his method*, and that he might instruct his Disciples in it, he said unto them, *These were the words*
 44. *which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the Law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms (in the Volume of Old Testament) concerning me.* He opened their understandings, and said, *thus it is written, and thus it behoved* : And as a short Idea of what they were to do, he tells them,
 and

and ye are *Witnesses* of these things.

2. In pursuance of this method we find the *Evangelists* very curious, and very frequent in observing the accomplishment of the Prescriptions of the Old Testament, reciting sometimes the speeches of Christ, saying, that he did such, or such a thing, to the end that the Scriptures might be fulfilled: *I will not eat of the fruit of the Vine till all things be fulfilled.*

Sometimes in their own Persons observing the accomplishment of particulars, and noting either particular portions of Scriptures which were fulfilled, or the fulfilling of the Scriptures cited at large, without any particular Quotation. Thus the Evangelists writing of the ^aConception, ^bNativity, ^cName of Christ, ^dof his coming out of Egypt, ^edwelling at ^fNazareth, ^gmigration to Capernaum, ^hriding to Jerusalem: Say that these things were done that the Scriptures (or the saying of the Prophet) at large might be fulfilled: So likewise for the circumstances of his Passion, the

^a Mat. 1. 22.

^b Mat. 2. 15

^c Mat. 2. 23

^d 4. 14.

^e 21. 4.

^{Mat. 26. 56.} the ^h flight of his Disciples, ⁱ casting
^{i 27. 35.} lots upon his Garments, ^k Vinegar gi-
^{Joh. 19. 24} ven him to drink, ^l piercing his side,
^{Joh. 19. 29.} ^m bones remaining unbroken; &c.

^{i 37.} *Other times* they note the particu-
^{36.} *lar Prophet*, Christ ⁿ healed Diseases,
^{Mat. 8. 17} ^o poke in Parables, and that the say-
^{Mat. 13. 15.} ing of *Isaiah* the Prophet might be
^{Mat. 2. 17} fulfilled. ^p When *Herod* slew the
 Children, then was fulfilled that
 which was spoken by *Jeremy* the
 Prophet, *Rachel weeping for her Chil-*
dren, &c. and once we find a quota-
 tion of the second Psalm, and the
 like : *This for the Evangelists.*

3. *Lastly*, the Divine Authority
 of the Old Testament is asserted by
 the *Apostles*: Whom we find every
 where in their Writings, *citing* the
^{Gal. 3. 10} Testimonies of the ⁱ *Law* and the
^{Act. 7. 42.} *Prophets*, and the ⁱ *Psalms*; appealing
^{Act. 1. 28.} to them, ^u what saith the Scripture?
^{Rom. 4. 2.} ^x the Scripture hath concluded *so* or
^{Gal. 3. 22.} *so*: *Arguing* out of them, oft times
^{Act. 18. 24. 28.} *directly*; thus not only the Apostles
^{Jam. 4. 5.} but ^y *Apollos* mightily convinced the
 Jews, sometimes *ab absurdo*, ^z do ye
 think the Scripture speaks in vain?

In a word, the Apostles followed the way and method which their Master taught them; they asserted that the Gospel was ^apromised by the Prophets, ^b Rom. 1. 12
^b witnessed by the Law and the Pro- ^b Rom. 3. 21
 phets: ^c by all the Prophets. Affirm- ^a Act. 13.
 ing of themselves, that they believed ^{18. & 10.} 43.
^d all things written in the Law and in ^a Act. 24.
 the Prophets: and that they continu- ^{14.}
 ed testifying and saying ^a no other ^a Act. 26.
 things than the Prophets and Moses did ^{28.}
 say should come.

Finally, lest any place should be left for doubting concerning any part of the Old Testament, the Apostles have expressly asserted concerning the ^f Law, that it is holy, just, and good; ^f Rom. 7. 1
^g that the Prophets are holy, and ^h the ^{12.}
 Scriptures holy; that they are the ^a Act. 3. 21.
ⁱ Oracles of God, ^k lively Oracles; that ^b Tim. 3. 15
^l God spake by the Prophets; ^m that ⁱ Rom. 3. 2:
^{holy men} of God spake as they were ^k Act. 7. 38
 moved by the Holy Ghost. ^a Act. 3. 21:
 Lastly, ² Pet. 1.
 (in the Text) that the ⁿ ² Tim 3.
 wherein Timothy had been instituted ^{15.}
 by his Mother, were given by inspi-
 ration of God.

This is the sense of the New Testa-
 ment

ment concerning the *Old Testament*; supposing therefore the *Truth* of the *New Testament*, the *Divine Authority* of the *Old Testament* is to be acknowledged, contrary to the first Opinion of the Anti-scripturists.

II. The Second *Anti-scriptural* Opinion is of those who pretend to believe the *Truth*, but they deny or doubt the *Divine Authority* of the *New Testament*, either of the whole body of the *New Testament*, or at least of that part which delivers the *Speeches and Writings* of the *Apostles*.

Of this sort there are said to be many, who by the power and influence of their *Education* are restrained from denying or disbelieving the *Truth* of the *New Testament*, and yet through the infelicity of corrupt conversation are fallen from that *Veneration* which is due to writings supposed to be of *Divine Authority*.

For the *History* of the *New Testament* they have the same respect which they have for *Tacitus* or *Salust*, or some such other *History*; for the *My-*
stery

stery of the Gospel, the same which they have for some parts of *Plato*, or remnants of *Pythagoras*. For the *practical parts*, the same which they have for some parts of *Cicero* or *Seneca*, or *Epicetus*. All which writings they believe to be *true*, but no man believes them to be *Divine*. And some there are who pretend a great *veneration* for the *speeches* of *Christ*, but have a *meaner esteem* for the *words*, and *writings* of the *Apostles*.

In *opposition* to these *Opinions*, I shall shew, that *supposing* the *words* of *Christ* and the *Apostles* to be *True*, it will follow, that they are to be *esteemed* to be of *Divine Authority*.

Because Christ and the Apostles did profess and declare, that what they delivered to the world, was of *Divine Authority*.

And *because our Lord Christ* did undertake not only for *himself*, but for the *Inspiration* of his *Apostles* also.

I. In the examination of the *next Opinion*, I shall be obliged to lay before you some of the *evidences* of *Divine Authority* in *Christ* and his

B

Apo-

Apostles, here it is *sufficient* to produce their *assertions* of it.

The *time* of our Lord Christs *ministration* (betwixt three and four years) was spent in *preaching* and *working*, and his *Authority* was often *questioned*.

* Mat. 21: In *Luke* 20. 1. and in the * paral-
 23. lel places, *While he was in the Tem-*
 Mar. 11. 27 *ple teaching the People, and preach-*
ing the Gospel, the Chief Priests and
the Scribes and the Elders came upon
him, saying, tell us by what Autho-
riety thou dost these things (preachest
to the people) and who gave thee
that Authority?

Knowing the perverseness of their minds, he was *not* pleased to *gratifie* them at *that* time with a *direct* answer, but confounded them with a question concerning the Baptism of *John*.

But at Other times, upon Other occasions, we find the Divine Authority of his teaching abundantly declared and asserted by him.

* Joh. 14. 6 * *I am the way, the truth and the*
 * Joh. 6. 63 *life: The words which I speak unto*
 you

you they are *spirit*, and they are *life*. * *The words which I speak* I^a Joh. 14. 10:
 speak not of my *self*, but of the *Fa-*
ther which dwelleth in me. ^d *My* Joh. 7:16
Doctrine is not *mine*, but *his* that
 sent me. * *I do nothing* of my *self*,^e Joh. 8. 28
 but as my *Father* hath taught me so
 I speak. ^f *I have* not spoken of my^f Joh. 12.
self, but the *Father* that sent me, he 49.
 gave me a *Commandment* what I
 should say, and what I should speak.
^g *Whatsoever* I speak therefore, even^g Joh. 12.
 as the *Father* said unto me, so I speak. 50.
^h *Heaven* and *Earth* shall pass away,^h Mat. 24.
 but my words shall not pass away. 32.

Thus did our Saviour assert the Divine Authority of his Words.

2. *And so likewise the Apostles* are very frequent in asserting the Divine Authority of the things which they delivered.

In the 15. of the *Acts*, we find them assembled about the question of *Circumcision*; and they accounted it no robbery to entitle their Decrees to the Holy Ghost, *It seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, v. 18.*

Nor do they pretend to revelation

B when

when gathered in *Council only*, but each one severally for himself.

S. Peter professes of *himself*, that he
 * 1 Pet. 5.1 was a *partaker* of the *glory* which was
 revealed: And of his *Gospel*, that it
 * 1 Pet. 1.5. was *revealed* from Heaven.

* 1 Joh. 1.3. *S. John* declares that he had *κoinῶναι*
 with the *Father* and the *Son*; as for
 his other writings, that they con-
 tained the things *which* he had
 * 1 Joh. 1.1. heard and seen with his eyes, which
 he had looked on, and his hands had
 handled of the Word of life.

As for the *Apocalypse*, he professes,
 * Apoc. 1.1 that being in the *Spirit* in the *Isle* of
 9. 10. *Patmos* he received it, and was com-
 * 1b. 19. manded to *write* it in a Book.

The greatest writer among the Apo-
 stles was *S. Paul*, and the greatest *Que-*
stion hath always been (amongst Un-
 believers) concerning his *Calling* and
 the *Authority* of his *Gospel*.

He *knew this very well*, and there-
 fore we find him asserting both his
Calling and his *Gospel* with abundant
 care and diligence.

He *affirms* himself to have been
 an

an Apostle not ^a of man, neither by ^b Gal. 1. 1.
 man, but by Jesus Christ, and God
 the Father; That by ^b God himself he ^b Rom. 1. 1.
 was separated to preach, constituted ^a Tim. 1. 11
 a Preacher, an Apostle, and a Defen- ^{Phil. 1. 17.}
 der of the Gospel. As concerning
 his Gospel, he professes to have ^c re- ^{Eph. 3. 1.}
 ceived it by Revelation of God.

As for the Spirit wherewith he
 wrote and preached, he professed him-
 self ^d ready to give a proof of Christ ^d 2 Cor. 13.
 speaking in him. He appealed to the ^{3.}
 Prophetick Spirit then in the Church, ^c 1 Cor. 14.
 * If any man think himself a Prophet or ^{37.}
 Spiritual, let him acknowledge the
 things which I write to be the Command-
 ments of God.

Out of this assurance it was that
 he enjoined his Epistles to be read in
 the Churches of ^f Coloss, & Laodicea, ^f Col. 4. 16.
^b Thessalonica, and ⁱ excommunicates ^b 2 Thes. ^{Ibid.}
 such as should be disobedient in that ^{3. 14.}
 particular.

And lest any one should here re-
 peat the Objection made against our
 Saviour, Thou bearest witness of thy
 self, thy witness is not true.

S. Paul speaking of all the Apostles, Eph 4.11 affirms that God had ^a set them in the Church, and that ^b the Mystery of the Gospel was revealed to the holy Apostles by the Spirit.

Particularly, notwithstanding that dispute betwixt S. Peter and S. Paul (from the ^{} first Ages of the Church to our own Times, objected by Unbelievers to the prejudice of Religion) it is remarkable, that, in the same place where S. Paul gives an account how ^c Peter was to be blamed, and how and wherefore he withstood him to his face at Antioch, he doth expressly affirm, that the Gospel of the Circumcision was committed to Peter, and that God wrought effectually in Peter to the Apostleship of the Circumcision.*

On the other side S. Peter, in that very place, where he may seem to complain of the ^d Δυσνόητα of S. Paul, yet even there he owns him as his beloved Brother, acknowledges his Wisdom to have been given him of God, and numbers all his Epistles, inter τὰς λοιπὰς γραφάς, amongst the other Scriptures.

3. Lastly,

^{*} Porphyr.
Hier. Pro-
œm. Galat.
^c in c. 2.
Celsus.

^c Gal. 2.

^d 2 Pet. 3. 15

3. *Lastly*, for such as would put a difference of *degrees* betwixt the Authority of the words of *Christ*, and the *writings and Sermons of the Apostles*, they may take notice, that the *Authority of these*, resolves it self into the *veracity* of *Christ* himself.

He it was who being to leave the World, promised his Disciples again and again, that he would ^a send down ^{Joh. 15. 26.} upon them the *Holy Spirit*, that should ^b instruct them and teach them ^{14. 26.} all things, that should ^c Lead them into ^{16. 13.} all truth, ^d Bring to their remembrance ^{14. 26.} all things which he himself had spoken, that should ^e shew them things to ^{16. 13.} come, that with this Spirit they should not be lightly dash'd, or sprinkled, but that they should be ^f Baptized; and ^{1 A. 45.} as it were plunged into it.

How all these *Promises* were performed, and how the *Affertions* of the Divine Authority of the Words of *Christ*, and the *Apostles* were proved to be true, I am next to shew. In the interim I conclude, that supposing the truth of the words of *Christ* and his *Apostles*, they are to be esteemed of Divine Authority.

III. The third Opinion is of such as *pretend* to believe *matters of fact* to have been *truly related* in the *New Testament*, but they do not believe the *truth of the Doctrinal* parts relating to *Faith* or *Manners*.

Of these there have always been too great a number, not only *pretenders*, who under a *form* of Christianity deny the *power* thereof, but generally all sorts of *Hereticks*. When *Porphyrus* had revolted from *Christianity* to *Platonism*, and had bent all his Forces against the *Scripture-History*, he was *refuted* not only by *Lactantius*, and *Methodius*, men Orthodox in *Doctrine*, but by *Eusebius* and *Apollinaris*; and of late days, *Socinus* and others have well asserted the *truth* of the *Scripture-History* who yet have been *offended* at the *dogmatical* parts of the *Gospel*, and concerning the *Faith* have made *shipwrack*.

In Opposition to these I shall endeavour to demonstrate, that, *Supposing Matters of Fact* to be *truly related* in the *New Testament*, it is *unreasonable*

ble to suspect the *truth* of *any* of the *Doctrines* delivered by *Christ* or his *Apostles*.

Amongst the various fancies concerning *Religion*, wherewith the whole *world* hath been always embroiled: *Two things* there are wherein all the *Sons of Adam* have agreed; namely, 1. *That* that is to be *believed* which hath received the *testimony* of *God*. And 2. *That* this *testimony* is to be gathered from instances of supernatural *Wisdom* and *Power*.

In the study of *natural* and *Philosophical Theologie*, the *Speculativi* amongst the *Greeks* and *Romans*, and other *Nations*, *sought* after *Wisdom*, (*Reason*, and *Demonstration*. *But*) to reduce the *People* to the forms of *religious Rites* and *Sacrifices* prescribed them, *they* were made to believe the *Epiphanies* of the *Gods*, and the manifestations of their *Wisdom*, and *Power*, by *Oracles* and *Works* *supernatural*.

To these even *Mahomet* pretended though his great *Argument* was from
the

the Sword : and of *the Jews* I need not speak.

For a *Foundation of Religion*, and in our *inquisition* after that, short of this *Testimony* we ought not to stay ; further we cannot go : And herein is the utmost of humane *wisdom* to consider well those *Evidences* upon which we adventure the *interest* of our *eternity*.

To this evidence therefore we appeal in asserting the *Doctrine* of our Lord *Christ*, and his *Apostles* ; Namely to the instances of *Supernatural Knowledge* and *Supernatural Power*, whereby their *Doctrine* was attested.

I shall not here wave the force, but I shall decline the *repetition* of what I have formerly spoken concerning the attestations given to it by *Visible Signs*, *Audible Voices*, *Apparitions of Angels*, *Fulfilling the Prophecies*, *Evidences of Christs Resurrection*, *Mission of the Holy Ghost*.

In *Joh. 7. 15.* the *Jews* wondred at *Christ* that he knew any thing : How
knoweth

knoweth this man *Letters*, seeing he never learned them? but if we mark the *Scriptures*, we shall find that he knew all things, and that nothing was withdrawn from the reach of his understanding.

He knew the *sickness* and death of *Lazarus*, though absent and at a distance; He saw *Nathaniel* under the *Fig-tree*, and convinced him that he was the Son of God, and the King of *Israel*: *Come see a man* (said the *Woman of Samaria*) which told me all things that ever I did, *is not this the Christ*?

He was *κατακρυβέντος*: The secret murmurs at his hard sayings, the inward desires to ask him *Questions*; the Reasonings and Dialogisms of the hearts of his Disciples; & the secret Councils of the Scribes and Pharisees, their evil surmisings, their treacherous intentions to intrap him, their mental Blasphemy, were all naked and manifest before him.

He knew what was in man, and needed not that any one should tell him;

Mat. 17. him; ^a *He knew* the various *Kinds* of
 21. *Devils*, and how they were to be e-
 Mat. 17. 21 jected: *This Kind* cometh not out
 Mat. 17. 27 but by Prayer and Fasting. *He knew*
 the *Fishes* of the Sea, and *where* they
 were, and *what* was in them.

He knew not only things *past* and
 Joh. 18. 4 *present*, but *to come*; ^b *He foresaw* all
 11. 11. *things* that were to come upon him,
 13. 11. ^c *who it was* that should betray him,
 Mat. 20. he foretold his Disciples *all the* cir-
 18. cumstances of his *Passion*, ^d *how* he
 Mar. 10. was to be *Betrayed*, ^e *Condemned*, ^f *de-*
 23. *livered* to the Gentiles, ^g *mocked*,
 Mat. 16. *scourged*, *spit on*, *kill'd* and *Cru-*
 21. *cified* at *Jerusalem*.
 Joh. 14. 28.

Behold, saith he, *I tell you before*;
 Luk. 19. ^h *Let this saying sink into your hearts*.
 44. He ⁱ forewarned *Peter* of his *denial*,
 Mat. 26. ^k and the *Disciples* of their *flight*.
 34. ^l
 31.

^l *He foretold* things to come *after*
 Luk. 21. *his death*, the *time* and *manner* of the
 20. *destruction* of *Jerusalem*: The *success*
 of his *Gospel*, the *Effect* (unlikely) of
 Joh. 12. his *Crucifixion*, ^m that it should draw
 32. all men after him, ⁿ that it should be
 Mat. 24. *preached* and *believed* in the whole
 14. world

world ^a spreading it self like *Leaven*, ^a Mat. 13. 31.
 and like a *grain of Mustard-seed*, ^b Luk. 10. 18.
^b that *Satans Kingdom* should be *de-*
stroyed suddenly like *lightning*; not-
 withstanding the ^c *false Christs* and ^c Mat. 24. 25.
false Prophets which should arise.

These and many more were in-
 stances of the supernatural *knowledge*
 of Christ: And for his *power*, the time
 would fail me to insist upon the many
 and various instances mentioned in
 the Gospels.

I shall omit the exercise of his do-
 minion over the Sun, Moon, and Stars,
 Plants, and Animals, Earth, and
 Water, the Wind and the Sea, and
 briefly mind you of those which con-
 cerned the bodies of men; how he
 1. Fed their *hunger*, 2. Healed their *dis-*
tempers, 3. Raised their *dead*, and ^a Mat. 14. 19.
 4. Cast out *Devils*. ^b 15. 36.

He fed ^a 4000 at one time, and ^c Mat. 15. 30.
^b 5000 at another, with 5 or 7 Loaves,
 and a few little Fishes. ^d 9. 27.

He healed the ^c *blind*, ^d *lame*, ^e *deaf*, ^b Mat. 8. 14
^f *dumb*, ^g *maimed*, ^h *feverish*, ⁱ *hydro-* ⁱ Mar. 14. 4
^k *pical*, ^k *paralytic*, ^l *leprons*, and ^m *luna-* ^k Mat. 4. 13
tick ⁿ 12.
ⁿ Mat. 4. 23

^a Luk. 22. tick persons. He cured not ^a green
^{51.} wounds only, but ancient inveterate
^b Mat. 9. 20 *Maladies* of ^b 12, of ^c 38 years conti-
^c Joh. 5. 5. nuance, *one* that was *born blind*.

He used no *Plasters* nor *Potions*, no
Telefsmans or other *Charms*, but per-
^d Multos. formed all these things by a ^d touch
^e Mat. 9. 20 of his *Hand* or of his ^e *Garment*. He
^f Mat. 8. 6. healed ^f *absent* persons as well as pre-
^g Joh. 5. 5. sent, ^g he spoke the word only and they
 were healed.

He raised to life the Daughter of
^h Mar. 5. 41 *Jayrus*, the ^h *Widows* Son at *Naim*,
ⁱ Luk. 7. 11 his Friend ⁱ *Lazarus*, and ⁱ many bo-
^k Joh. 11. dies of the Saints. Many of which
 39. ^k Mat. 27. healed and raised persons lived till
 52. about *Trajan's* time, as *Quadratus* a
^l Euf. Eccl. Disciple of the Apostles affirmed in
^m H. l. 4. c. 3. his *Apology* to *Hadrian* the Empe-
 3. 37. rour.
ⁿ Annot. p. 8. i

Like a *strong man armed* he cast
 out Devils, whatever *kind* they
 were of he quickly dislodged them;
^o Mat. 17. that *foaming* and *tearing* Devil
 18. which withstood the power of his
Disciples, and threw down and tore the
 possessed person, even as he was yet
 coming

coming to Christ *himself*; he present-ly rebuked, and healed the child, and delivered him to his Father.

Neither their *long possession*, nor their *numbers* could secure them, he cast ^a *seven at once* out of *Mary Mag-* ^{Mar. 16. 9}
dalen, and an ^b *whole Legion* out of a ^{Luk. 8. 27}
certain man of the Country of the *Gadarens*, who had been possessed by them a *long time*.

Moreover, for *attestation* to the truth of his Gospel, he *delegated* all this power to *others*, to the ^c *12 Apostles*, to ^{Mat. 10. 7}
the ^d *70 Disciples*: ^e He bequeathed it ^{Luk. 9. 3.}
to *Believers* at his *death*, and they also ^{Luk. 10. 1.-9.}
received and exercised this super-^f *natural power*. ^{Mat. 16. 17.}

I have given a few instances of the Supernatural Wisdom and Power of Christ solitarily considered: The History of the Gospel affords us many Examples wherein they were gloriously combined.

By his Knowledge ^g he foretold his ^{Mat. 16. 21.}
Resurrection, he ^h performed it by his ^{Mat. 28. 2.}
Power. By his *Divine Understand-* ⁱ *ing* he ^{Joh. 16. 16, 28.} ^{20. 17.} fore-
saw his *Ascension*, and by
the

¶ *Luk. 24.* the *Power* of his *Divinity* he *ascended*.

He *ascended*, and by his *Power* he fulfilled the *Predictions* and *Promises* ¶ *Act. 2. 4.* which he had made. He *sent* down the *Holy Spirit*, and *shed forth* the *gifts* of *supernatural* *Wisdom* and *Power* upon his *Apostles*.

Not to mention the Apparition of
 ¶ *Acts 9:* Angels, and of Christ himself, the
 ¶ *Acts 10,* 10. *Bath. Kol.* the *Extasies*, *Dreams*,
 22. 17. *Visions*, and *Impulses* which were
 ¶ *Acts 16. 9* given them for their *own* assurance:
 ¶ *16. 6, 7.* That they might be enabled to preach the Gospel to all Nations, and deliver to the world those Scriptures whereof we are speaking, they had *the word* of *Knowledge* and of *Wisdom* and of *Faith*, and the *gift* of divers *Tongues*, and *interpretation* of *Tongues* bestowed upon them.

And to *justify* their *Doctrine* to the *Ages present* and to *come*, they had the *Gifts* of *Propheſie*, and of *Healing*, and of *Miracles*.

¶ *Ap. 4. 1.* *John* (the beloved *Disciple*) heard a *voice* as it were of a *Trumpet*, talking with him, which said, Come up hither,

hither, and I will shew thee *things which shall be hereafter*; and immediately he was in the *Spirit*, and received the *Revelation*.

^a *Paul an Apostle* (though born out of due time) came to Visions and Revelations, he *twice foretold* what should *happen* to the *Ship* wherein he was carried *Prisoner* to *Rome*. He *foretold* the ^b *Apostacy* of the *latter times*, the *rising* of *Antichrist*, ^c the *perillous times* which should come upon the world in the last days. ^d *Agabus a Believer* at large *foretold* the *Famine* which was to come upon all the world, ^e and the *binding* of *Paul* at *Jerusalem*, &c.

But the *Instances* of *Supernatural Power* exercised in *healing* of *Diseases*, *raising* the *dead*, ^f *confounding* the *Opposers* of their *Doctrine*, and in several other kinds by the *Apostles*, and their *Companions* and *Adherents*, the *Preachers* and *Writers* of the *Doctrine* of the *Gospel*, are so abundantly delivered in the *New Testament*, that I shall not offer at *particulars*.

C

In

^a Act. 27.
16, 22.

^b 2 Thes. 2.

^c 2 Tim. 3. 1

^d Act. 11. 8.
21. 10.

^e Act. 5. 13.

In the 4. of the Acts we find all the Apostles praying ἐκθυσμένον, that God would stretch forth his hand to heal, & that signs and wonders might be done by the Name of his holy Child Jesus. And immediately the place was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and with Power.

The particular *Miracles* of particular persons are recorded. In one word, they went and preached every where the Doctrines which are written in the Gospel; the Lord working with them, and confirming their words by mighty signs and wonders, and gifts of the Holy Ghost.

This is the state of the matter of Fact, as it is propounded in the New Testament: I conclude therefore, that, supposing matters of Fact to be truly delivered in the New Testament, there is no reason to doubt of the Doctrines delivered by Christ or his Apostles, relating to faith or manners. And I come to the consideration of the last and extreme Opinion of the Anti-scripturists.

IV. The

IV. *The last Opinion, is of those who deny the truth of the Relation of matters of Fact delivered in the New Testament, and in consequence reject the whole body of the Scriptures.*

I could wish there were no such as these, and that what I have yet to say were altogether needless for that reason.

But what means then the publick Rumors which we hear? and whence is an Opinion gone into the world, that some great Philosophers and men of generous reason are dissatisfied concerning the truth of Scripture, and believe the Authority of it to be wholly derived from the Magistrate.

In reference to these I shall endeavour,

1. *Briefly, to shew that the ground upon which these Wisemen and Philosophers reject the Scriptures, is contrary to the Reason of mankind.*

2. *To evince, that the belief of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures is most agreeable to Reason.*

I. *As for the Argument* and ground of those (amongst us Christians) that reject the *body of the Scriptures*, I do not remember to have heard of other than this.

They have often called upon Believers, Pastors perhaps, or Doctors in the Church, for a clear and undeniable evidence of the truth of the story of the Gospel, and they have not afforded it: therefore they conclude, the Scriptures are to be rejected.

But is this the reasoning of generous Wits? and men of mighty deeds in Disputation, of men pretending to the depths of Reason and Philosophy?

To give a man a *clear and undeniable evidence* of any thing, there are but *two ways, viz.* To convince either his *senses* or his *Understanding*; the former whereof is to be done by *Experiment*, the later by *Demonstration*.

Would they have now an Experiment whether such or such a thing were done 16 or 1700 years ago? Would they have a demonstration of
parti-

particulars, in their nature indifferent to be done or not to be done, depending upon the liberty of Causes?

Well were it for the world, if these Beaux Esprits would have the patience, and endure the fatigue of acquainting themselves with the ways of knowledge (Experiment and Demonstration) it would not then be troubled with the dangerous Impertinency of such Pretenders.

Then these men would not call for Experiment in a subject incapable of it, and (being instructed that Demonstration is only of Universal Propositions in materia necessaria, whose contrary Positions imply a contradiction) they would know, that to demand this kind of evidence of the truth of the story of the Gospel, is to be absurdly injudicious, and to act contrary to the Reason of mankind.

For seeing we may not with civility suppose this principle to be advanced only for the destruction of Religion, and the ruine (or at least undeniable hazard) of the

Souls of men; *We ought to believe* that these *Philosophers* intend this as a general *Maxim*; "that (in matters
 "at least of moment) men ought not to
 "adventure to act, but upon clear and
 "undeniable evidence, and (speaking
 "properly) that wise men ought to believe nothing at all. Wherefore let us suppose this for a general principle, and consider what will follow.

Setting aside the knowledge of the *Affections* of a few *Lines* and *Numbers*, is not all learning to be cast away? Must not the *Civil World* of mankind be brought to swift confusion? must not mankind it self, in a few days come to an end?

Suppose a *Subject* should not yield his *Obedience*, or a *Tenant* his *Rent*, till *Titles* be made out by *Experiment* or *Demonstration*. Suppose the *Husband-man* and the *Merchant*, the *Artificer*, the *Souldier*, the *Banker*, and the *Judge* should not adventure, but stay for the assurance of *Experiment* or *Demonstration*, would not the whole world be confounded?

Arist. polit.
l. 7. c. 8.

Suppose

Suppose men should not *marry*, nor take *Physick*, nor eat or drink till they should have clear and undeniable evidence, that all these things are what they suppose, and shall succeed according to expectation, would not mankind quickly be spent, and brought to an end?

If the management of all humane concernments, *Political*, *Oeconomical*, *Personal*, proceed upon the grounds of *Belief* and *Hope*, and rational (but not demonstrative) inference. If neither these *Philosophers* (if they would consider) nor any other Person, either ever did, or possibly could, perform any one action, upon such evidence, as these men require concerning the truth of the stories of the *Scripture*; then to reject them for want of such evidence, is repugnant to the Reason of mankind.

I proceed therefore to my second assertion, that the *Belief* of the *Divine Authority* of the *Scriptures* is most agreeable to reason.

That the *Divine Authority* of all the

C 4 *Scriptures*

Scriptures of the *Old* and *New Testament*, are *undeniably concluded* from supposition of the *truth* of the *Relation* or *History* of matters of *fact* in the *New Testament*, I have already shewn: And that the *rejection* of all *History* is *against* the *Reason* of mankind is evident, because all mankind receive some *History* or other: wherefore I shall briefly shew,

1. That the *History* of the *New Testament* hath all those *advantages* whereof any *History* is *capable*.

2. That it hath *greater* advantages than any other *History*.

1. The Arguments inducing men to the belief of any historical Relation, are all of them

Either { *Ab intra, Internal*, from the 1. *Credibility* and *Scibility* of the Object. 2. The *Knowledge* and *Integrity* of the Writers. 3. The *way* and *manner* of writing.
 { *Ab extra, External*, The 1. *Reception* of it in the world. 2. *Concurrent* testimonies of *strangers*. 3. The *Concessions* of *Adversaries*, and the like.

In

In all which particulars, no History in the world can justly pretend any advantage above that of the New Testament.

1. For the Credibility, Object, and Cognoscibility of it.

1. To say that instances of *super-natural Power and Wisdom* are *impossible*, is to deny the power of God and his providence in governing the world: And to say that such things are *incredible*, as are and have been actually believed, in all times, and by all sorts of persons, Jews and Gentiles, Christians and Mahometans (a few Atheistical persons only excepted) is an absurdity.

The History that we speak of, pretends to no Intrigues or Cabalistical Counsels, or Mysteries of State, but contains it self within the limits of things Visible and Audible, things that were done or spoken; so that no History can have advantage over it, respectu Objecti.

2. As for Knowledge in the deliverers, I shall shew it by a brief Induction.

The

The whole *New Testament* consists of the Books of the *Revelation*, *Epistles*, *Acts of the Apostles*, and the *Gospels*.

The *Authors* of the *Epistles* and the *Revelation*, in the *Narrative parts* of them, deliver the things *done* or *spoken to* or *by themselves*, and could not be ignorant of their own *experiences*.

The *Book* of the *Acts* contains some things *done by* or *to the rest* of the *Apostles*, but chiefly the *concernments* of *Paul*; and it was written by *Luke*, who was an *individual Companion* of *Paul*, and *intimately conversant* with the *rest* of the *Apostles*.

For the things *Related* in the *Gospel* of *S. Luke*, he saith they were *delivered* to him by *those* who from the *beginning* were *Eye-witnesses* of the *works*, and *Ministers* of the *Word*, and *his History* agrees with the *other Evangelists*.

The *Gospel* of *S. Mark* hath *nothing* which is not in *S. Matthew* or *S. John*, and was *dictated* by *S. Peter*, the *Head* of the *Apostles*.

S. Matthew was an *Apostle*, and *S. John*

John the Bosom Apostle of Christ. The Apostles were chosen by him for Witnesses of his Words and Actions, they were with him from the beginning of his Ministry, continued with him till his death, conversed with him till his Ascension; That which they had heard, which they had seen with their Eyes, which they had looked on, which their hands had handled of the word of life, that they delivered in writing to the World: And more than this no Writer or Relater of History can pretend to.

2. For Arguments of their sincerity, they have left ^a *Precepts of Veracity*, and ^b *prohibitions of lying*, under pain of Hell torments, the Lake that burneth with fire and brimstone: ^c *They have protested* that they did not follow cunningly devised Fables; that they did things sincerely as in the sight of God.

^a Cor. 5. 8.
6. 4. 8.
Phil. 4. 8.
^b Jam 3. 14
Eph. 4. 25.
Apoc. 21.
8. 27.
22. 15.
^c 2 Pet. 1. 16
2 Cor. 2. 17

They have appealed to the searcher of hearts: The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ knoweth that I lie not. The things which I write unto you, behold, before God I lie not, Gal. 1. 20. saith S. Paul.

They

1Thes. 2. 3. They have left behind them various instances of their simplicity and godly sincerity in representing their failings to the world, and of candour and ingenuity in distinguishing the dictates of their own Reason from the inspirations of the Holy Spirit: I speak by permission, not by commandment of the Lord: This say I, not the Lord; Thus it is according to my judgment, &c. 1 Cor. 7.

But besides all this, let the matter be estimated according to common reason: If these men did devise a Fable and impose it upon the world, what end could they propound to themselves in so doing? was there any profit in being destitute of all things? or pleasure in being persecuted, afflicted, and tormented? or honour in being counted Fools and Madmen.

Before they began to publish the Stories whereof we speak, their Master was gone, and all worldly hopes were gone away with him: If they were not bound in Conscience, and in Spirit,

rit ; what *obligation* had he laid upon them to *labour* and *suffer* for his *honour* as they did ?

To omit the severity of his behaviour to them, He called them off from their *Vocations*, *Peter*, and *Andrew*, *James*, and *John* from their *Fishing*, *Matthew* from his *Customers* place, the Mat. 9. 9.
rest accordingly.

They *forsook* their *Nets* ; their Mat. 4. 20.
* *ships*, their *Relations*, and all their 22.
interests, and followed him.

And this they did (*clearly* and *plainly*) believing that he was to be a *Great Temporal Prince*, and in hopes of *Preferment* under him. In this Expectation they continued to the last minute of his conversation with them upon Earth, and he permitted them so to do.

Their last words to him were delivered in this question, *Lord wilt thou at this time restore the Kingdom unto Israel?* A. 1. 6.
Of the *thing* it self they *never* doubted, they *only* desire to be *informed* of the *time*,

Now after *so long expectation* ?
Consider his *Answer*. His

His Answer was this, It is not for you to know the times, &c. but ye shall receive power when the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses of me unto the utmost parts of the earth; and immediately he vanished away.

Was this an answer to their Question? or a satisfaction to their expectation? Was this an Obligation laid upon them? If he had not sent down the Holy Ghost, this would have moved them indeed, but it would have been to rage and indignation; this would have obliged them indeed, but it would have been to detest and abhor the name and memory of him that had abused them. But for the honour of his name, not their own, they did and suffered all things, and gloried in it. An irrefragable argument of their sincerity in the things which they delivered.

3. Of the internal Arguments for the belief of History, there remains only the Consideration of the way and manner of writing.

Histories then carry their own credentials

dentials in them, when the principal parts of them are delivered with such circumstances of times, places, and persons, as may render them liable to Examination, and Refutation, if they contain any falshood in them.

And in this particular, no History hath any advantage over that History whereof we are speaking, as will be evident to him that considers it thoroughout.

Concerning John the Baptist, it is recorded, that he was born some few Months before Christ, that his Mother was Elizabeth, that his Father was Zachariah, a Priest of the Course of Abia, that they lived in the Hill-Country. Luk. 1. 5.

He began to preach in the 15. of Tiberius, Pilat being Governour of Judea, Herod Tetrarch of Galilee, his Brother Philip Tetrarch of Iturea, and of the Region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias Tetrarch of Abilene. Luk. 3. 1.
Punctual and particular.

Soon after this he was Imprisoned and Beheaded by Herod, for reprehending him about Herodias, all which were matters of Fact, very easie, if Mat. 14. 3.
Vide Jo-
sep. Ant.
18. c. 9. 10.
Luk. 2. 1.
false,

false, to have been refuted.

Concerning *Christ*, his birth is stated to have been at a time the *most remarkable* that ever was, when the *whole world* was taxed by *Augustus*, in the *days* of *Herod*, when *Cyrenius* was *Governour* of *Syria*; the place *easie* to be enquired of, it was in a Manger, in an *Inne*, in a *Town* that was a little one among the *thousands* of *Juda*, *easie* to be examined:

When he was about 30 years old, he was Baptized of *John*, & within a few days after he called his *Apostles*; and in less than *four years* space he performed all his *mighty Works*, whereof I shall mention only some few particulars.

At *Cana* in *Galilee* he turned *Water* into *Wine*, at a *Wedding*, where was much company. He raised the *Daughter* of *Jayrus*, the *Ruler* of the *Synagogue*, there was but one in that place, she was his *only Daughter*, and about 12 years Old. He healed the *Servant* of that *Centurion* that had built a *Synagogue*. Can any thing be more particular?

At *Bethany*, 15 *Furlongs* from *Jerusalem*,

Jerusalem, a few days before his death, he raised *Lazarus* after he had been dead *four days*. Could any thing be more *examinable*?

His death was at *Jerusalem*, at the time of the *Passover*, a time of greatest annual *concourse* in the *world*, and then it is said, that the *Sun* was darkened, the *Veil* rent, the *Rocks* torn a-pieces, the *Graves* opened. Can any thing be more *refutable* than these things, if they had been false?

So likewise for the *Apostles*. The healing of *Aeneas* at *Lydda*, raising of *Dorcas* at *Joppe*, the passages with *Cornelius* Captain of the Band called the *Italian Band* at *Cæsarea*, and many other *acts* of *Peter*. The increpation of *Barjesus* at *Paphos*, in the presence of *Sergius Paulus* the Governour. The healing of a Cripple at *Lystra*, in the presence of the *Priest* of *Jupiter*, besides many other *acts* of *Paul*, and the rest of the *Apostles*, are so circumstantiated in the *History*, that if false they might have been very easily contradicted.

D

But

Acts 9. 33.

40.
10. 1.

13. 6.

14. 13.

But *besides* all these, this History contains a *Narration* of things done and said, not only by persons well affected, but by *Herod* and *Pontius Pilate*, and the *Roman Governours*, by the *Pharisees*, the *Scribes*, the *High Priests*, and the *Sanhedrim*; all of them *Enemies* both to the *Historians* and the *History*; and if any of these things had been convicted of *falsehood*, would not the *credit* of the whole *Gospel* have (at once) been utterly *overthrown*?

I conclude therefore, that in respect of *internal Arguments* for belief, no *History* hath, or indeed can have any advantage above the *History* of the *New Testament*.

2. As for *External Arguments*, I can but name them. Though the whole world interested themselves against the story (so examinable as you have heard) though the *Books* were extant, while the *memory* of things was recent, *Matthew* within seven years, *Mark* within eleven, *Luke* about twenty four, post mortem *Christi*; the *Epistles* of *Peter*

Peter and Paul within thirty years, all the rest, *intra unius hominis aetatem*, yet no man could ever convince them of falsehood.

The stories were received by men of the greatest Wisdom, Learning, and Virtue amongst the Greeks and Latines. Many of the hardest passages were attested and confessed by Enemies and Unbelievers.

The Authors owned by Julian: the ^{10. c. Jul.} Cyrill c: ^{Orig. c. C.} Miracles confessed by Celsus: the ^{Euseb.} checking of the operation of the Devil ^{Tertio Hi-} by Porphyrius: ^{storianum,} the Darkness and ^{Citat. d. Ju-} Earthquake at the death of Christ by ^{ll. Afr. 3.} Thallus and Phlegon Trallianus: ^{Chronogra} the ^{Orig. c. c. 13.} Crucifixion of Christ (by Pilat under ^{15. 44.} Tiberius) by Tacitus: And in one ^{Annalium.} word, The entire Volume of the Scri-
ptures, the very same which our Church receives (by virtue of the belief of the History of the Gospel) ^{Arthanas.} before any ge- ^{Synops.} neral Council, or the time of Constan- ^{Const. ad} tine, without any Convocation of the ^{p. p. Nicea,} Clergy, or imperial Edict for that pur- ^{Vide Theo-} pose, was *instinctu quodam Chri-* ^{doret. l. 1.} *stiano*, generally received by all Chri- ^{c. 5. Gr-} ^{Lat. Pan.} stians,

stians, and the world made Christians.

In respect of all these Arguments, internal and external, I might have justly said, that the History of the Gospel hath the advantage of any other History; but seeing there are some particulars wherein the advantages are super-eminent, I shall speak a little of that distinctly by it self, and so conclude.

2. These *advantages* I shall reduce
to two heads, *Testimonium* } *Rei.*
 } *Dei.*

I. For the *Testimonium Rei*, consider,

1. *Opposition to* } *the Gospel.*
2. *Prevailing of* }

2. Prevailing of

1. Never *any* story was so much opposed as the *Books and History of the New Testament*, by *Jews and Gentiles*, by the *World* and by the *Devil*.

The *beginnings* and *propagation* of the Gospel was by the Jews *maliciously* and *strenuously* opposed in the times of *Christ* and his *Apostles*, and in all *succeeding Generations*.

Left

Lest all men should believe in Christ Joh. 11. 48
(because of his *Miracles*) the *Rulers*
took counsel to *destroy* him, the *Peo-*
ple cryed out to have him *Cruci-*
fied.

Lest the last error (as they called Mat. 27. 64
it) should be worse than the first, they
sealed up his *Sepulchre*, and set a watch
upon it; and lastly, *suborned* the *Soul-*
diers to say, that his *Disciples* came by
night while they were *sleeping* (how
could they know this?) and stole him
away.

That the first Miracle wrought by Act. 4. 6.
Peter and John might not spread a-
mong the *People*, the *Rulers* and *Elders*
and *Scribes*, *Annas* and *Caiaphas*, and
John and *Alexander*, and all the *Kin-*
dred of the *High Priest*, laid hands up-
on them, and put them in *hold*, and
threatned and *commanded* them not
to *speak* at all in the *Name* of *Je-*
sus.

When Stephen had uttered his testi- Act. 7. 57.
mony, the *people* cried with a loud
voice, and stopped their *Ears*, and
ran upon him with one accord, and

cast him out of the City, and stoned him.

A^{ct}.9.2. Wherever they met with *Believers*, *Men* or *Women*, they *haled* them into *Prison*, breathing out *threatnings* and *slaughter*. Wherever they met with the *Preachers*, they *opposed* and A^{ct}.13.45 *blasphemed*, they *tumultuated*, they 14.2. stirred the *Gentiles*, they en- 13.50. raged the *chief men* of the *Cities* and the *honourable women* against them.

The instances of their *malicious opposition*, in all *ages* of the *Church*, are so many as are not to be *numbred* in a few *Minutes*, but would *require* many *days* only to *name* them.

They first stirred up *Nero* to persecute the *Christians*, they contrived the death of *Polycarpus*, they stood by, and insulted over the dying *Martyrs*; in a word, whoever shall read the *stories* of *primitive times*, he will find that the *Jews* were generally the *Scters* and *Informers* against the *Martyrs*, and the *Brokers* for their *Goods* after *Execution*: And the *Histories* of our

our own and other Nations will shew us the height of their malice, and the continuance of it.

Now, beside the little Nation of the Jews, the rest of the whole world, when this History began to be published, and the Books written, were Heathen, universally devoted to the Devil, whom therefore our Saviour stiles, the Prince of this world.

And now that feud which had depended betwixt the seed of the Serpent and the seed of the woman 4000 years, was by the preaching and writing of these things brought to a Crisis.

The professed and declared design of the Gospel, was to drive the Devil out of his Dominion; Notwithstanding the antiquity of his possession, the universality of his Church, and the consent of all Nations, whereby he held his title. Notwithstanding his Empire was supported by Governours and Laws, and fortified by the Arms and actual strength of all the world, he saw, that if the Gospel were not suppressed,

pressed, a little time would spoil the pride of all his glory, that in a moment he should fall like lightning from Heaven.

Deut. 7.

That he should be exorcised out of the bodies which he possessed: That his famous Oracles should soon be put to silence: his gorgeous Temples and Images should be torn down, his Mysteries and lying wonders set at nought: That Prayers and Vows would be made to him no more, and he should cease to be celebrated in the Songs of his Poets, and Hymns of his Hierophante.

That his revelling Festivals would be turned to mourning, no more gifts would be presented, no beasts, nor children, women or men sacrificed upon his Altars.

The Contention was de rerum summa (pro aris & focis) and his rage was kindled accordingly: He summons together all his wiles and stratagems, he musters all his forces, he sounds an Allarm to the world, stirs up young and old, rich and poor, all ages,

ages, sexes, conditions, the people wise and unwise, the Common Souldiers *orig. &c.* and Commanders, Counsellors and Judges, Senate and Emperours, by suppressing these Books, and destroying the Believers of them, to erase the memory of the Gospel, and abolish it for ever.

The people were enraged against the Believers, as against the common Enemy of mankind, and *pro solenni suo*, they slandered them with unthought of wickedness, they imputed to them all the calamities of the world: And required them to death: *Si Tiberis ascendit in mœnia---Christianos ad Leonem---*

Against these Books, the Learned employed their Learning, and the Witty employed their Wit. Celsus, Porphyrius, Jamblichus, Hierocles, and other Philosophers, endeavoured to dispute them out of the world. Symmachus and Libanius, and other Rhetors to declaim them away. Julian and Lucian and other *Scoptick wits*, endeavoured to jeer and droll away the credit of them. Mean

Mean while the *Senators* and *Lawyers* employ themselves to *destroy* the *Books*, by *stretching* against them the *ancient Laws* against *bringing* in *Foreign Religions*, and against *Magical* and *Fatidical Books*: And to *destroy Books* and *Believers* by *New Laws* made for that purpose, against *Combinations* (*Heteriæ*) *Sacrilege*, *Treason*, the *Law* that none should *buy* or *sell*, or *draw water* without *Thurification* to the *Gods*, and the like.

Plin. Ep.
10.97.

By force of these they persecute the *Believers*, as *Enemies* to the *Commonwealth*, and *Traytors* to the *Emperour*, as *sacrilegious* persons, and *contemners* of *Religion*.

The people sometimes rising upon them without any *Edict*, sometimes by virtue of *Edicts Imperial* or *Proconsular*.

From the beginning of the *Gospel* to the end of *Dioclesian* and *Maximian*, this was the state of *Believers*:

Their *Scriptures* were forbidden to be read, and required to be burned; their

their Oratories and (*obscure*) Churches were pulled in pieces ; their Estates were plundered and confiscate ; their bodies were imprisoned and tormented ; Fire and sword, hot Iron Chairs and Coffins, Gridirons, and Cauldrons, Hooks, Stakes, and Gibbets, the Teeth of Lions, and Tygers, &c. were their portion.

It cannot be shewed, that ever any Book or Story met with equal Opposition.

2. Consider then how it prevailed, how quickly and largely, how deeply and effectually, although the Precepts were not contrived to solicit the Affections, nor the Doctrines to court the Reason of men.

At one Sermon of Peter 3000, at another 5000 were converted : Within a few years after the death of Christ we find by S. Peter, that the Gospel was preached throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia ; and Paul had planted it from Jerusalem round about to Illyricum : Besides what was done by other Apostles, in the Provinces assigned them at the Council of Jerusalem. Within

Act. 2. 41.

1 Pet. 1. 1.

Act. 15.

Lib. 10:
Epist. 97.

Within 66 years this grane of Mustard seed was become a Tree, Pliny Proconsul of Bithynia (to whom the care of Religion, *ex officio*, did appertain) appointed by Trajan to suppress the Christians, he writes to him, that this Belief was *Longè latèq; diffusa Civitates, Vicos, Agros, impletos Christi cultoribus.*

During the second Century, it had shot out great branches, the boughs of this Tree were stretched out, *Hæsterni sumus & vestra omnia implevimus.* Tertullian reckons up the known parts of the World, in quibus omnibus Christi nomen regnat, and concludes, *ubiq; porrigitur, creditur, colitur, regnat, adoratur.*

Adv. Juda-
91, c. 7, 8.

And lastly, During the third (à morte Christi) the Fowls of the air, and Beasts of the field lodged under the shadow of it: The Net drew good and bad to shore; the Roman Emperour and Empire declared themselves Christians, i.e. Believers and Assertors of these Books: So mightily grew the word of God and prevailed.

It went on conquering and to conquer, not by the Spirit of the Sword, but by the sword of the Spirit; the powers of the Earth, and the gates of Hell could not withstand it; it drove the Devil away with all his Temples, Idols, Oracles, Priests, Sacrifices, Services, like lightning: So fell the Dragon, the old Serpent that deceived the World, he was cast out with all his train.

So fell Lucifer the Son of the morn, his Friends and his Followers lamenting.

How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer the Son of the morning! Desolata Tempia rarissimus Victimarum emptor! Some complain of people forsaking of the Gods, others of the Gods forsaking their Oracles and Temples, and becoming useless to the World: He said I will ascend into Heaven, and exalt my Throne above the Stars, but he was soon brought down to Hell.

For the Gospel like Leaven or Fire from Heaven, seized upon all that stood before it; it leaven'd Cities, Islands, Castles,

Tert. Ap. 37 Castles, Councils, Camps, the Tribes and Decuries, the Palaces, Senate, Pleading-places.

It took possession of the Learned, and the Wise, the greatest and noblest Wits of the Eastern and Western Nations: It raised up Philosophers to confound the Philosophy, and noble Orators to confound the Rhetorick where-with it was opposed.

Against *Celsus* it excited *Origen*, against *Porphyrie*, *Apollinarius*, & *Methodius*; against *Porphyrie* and *Hierocles*, *Lactantius* and *Eusebius* (besides what was written *sparſim* by *Jerom*, *Augustine*, *Cyril*, &c.) It set up *Chrysostom* against *Libanius*, *Prudentius* against *Symmachus* and the *Rhetoricians*.

And as it spread it self large and high, so where it took possession, it took a deep possession, Quantum vertice---tantum radice: Those that received it truly, received it in the love thereof, it took possession of their hearts: it penetrated their spirits, and took its lodging in the inmost recesses of

of the *soul*. The *Contents* of these *Books* was their most *precious Pearl*, and they *hid* it in their *heart*. The *Books* themselves were their greatest *worldly treasure*, and rather than they would *deliver* them to be *burned*, they chose to suffer the *loss* of *honour*, *liberty*, *estate*, *Wives*, and *Children*, nay even *life* it self. When *Dioclesian* required the *Scriptures* that they might be *burned*, In one *Province* (*Egypt*) in one *Month*, 17000 persons chose rather to dye than to *deliver* them: In *Enf. l. 3. c. 3* comparison of these they counted not their *lives* dear to them; the *love* of them was *stronger* than *Death*, many *waters* could not *quench* it, neither could the *flouds* *drown* it. This was *Testimonium Rei*, and an *advantage* above all other *Histories*, or *Writings* in the *World*.

2. Moreover they had *Testimonium Dei*. Indeed all that is already *spoken* is an evidence of a *Divine assistance*: But more particularly, God gave *Testimony* to these *Books*, by

1. Their

1. *Their operation upon Believers of them.*

2. *His co-operation with Believers of them.*

1. *The Gospel which they contain, was the power of God to every true Believer. That which no Institution in Philosophy, nor Initiation in the Mysteries of any of the Gods, was ever*
able to accomplish, that was every where atchieved by the belief of the Gospel, in a moment. Like a charm from Heaven, it stilled the passions, and mortified the lusts of men. What a Beadroll doth Paul reckon up in the
Corinthians: But ye are washed (saith he) but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the spirit of our God.

Notwithstanding all the calumnies thrown upon Believers, and the prejudice wherewith they were loaded, the unpropitious and relucting world were forcibly convinced that the Believers of these Books were effectually taught to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and

*Lafl. de
fals. sap.
l. 3. c. 26.*

and godly in this present world: through the cloud of ignominy where-with they were encompassed, their innocency broke forth as the light, and their just dealing as the noon day; the piety, loyalty, justice, charity, magnanimity, patience, meekness, and purity of Believers of these Books, convinced the unbelieving world, that God was in them of a truth: for they teach as having Authority and Power, and not as the writings of other scribes.

2. But beside the operation of these Books upon the Believers, God was pleased to give testimony to them by his co-operation with them in signs and wonders, and mighty deeds.

The History of the Gospel tells us, that when Christ was even now leaving the world, he left this Legacy to Believers for confirmation of the truth of the Gospel; These signs (said he) shall follow them that believe; In my name they shall cast out Devils; Mar. 16. 17
Speak with new tongues; Take up Serpents; If they drink any deadly thing,

E

it

it shall not hurt them; They shall lay hands on the Sick, and they shall recover.

Now that this was made good, and that these signs (so long as there was need) were continued among Believers, we have as good assurance as we can have of any thing beyond our own memory or experience.

They have been delivered to us by a Cloud of Witnesses; by men of the greatest Wisdom and Learning in their Generations, by persons of such integrity, that they laid down their lives in testimony of their veracity; delivered not by hear-say, but upon their certain knowledge; delivered in their Disputations with, and Apologies to the Adversaries of Christianity, with a challenge to the examination of the truth, or a conviction of the falshood of them. Instances are very numerous, I shall produce only a very few.

*Dial. cum
Tryphone.*

Justin the Martyr (who suffered Anno 165) affirms to Trypho the Jew, that these supernatural gifts were found in his time among Christians.

Irenæus

Irenæus an Auditor of Polycarp, who was a Disciple of S. John (lived circa 206) affirms upon his own knowledge, that the gift of Prophecy was then frequent in the Church, that many had the gift of tongues, *ipsi audivimus*; Others cast out Devils, Others healed Diseases, Others raised the dead; and those raised persons continued many years amongst them, *pro certo*.

Iren. l. 22.

c. 36.

Euseb. l. 5. c. 7

item c. 20.

Tertullian in his *Apologetica adversus Gentes*, affirms that *Jam de vobis Demones ejiciunt*.

Origen against *Celsus*, saith, that he himself had seen by invocation of God, and the Name of Jesus very many that were delivered from grievous maladies, *καὶ ἐκστάσεων* (alienatione mentis) *μαλίων ἢ ἄλλων μανθίων*.

L. 3.

Not to mention others, S. Augustine in his Book *de Civitate Dei* (begun about 410, but many years in writing) l. 22. c. 8. gives an account of very many Miracles done at Hippo, Carthage, and other places, of no great distance, noting times, places, persons,

E 2

occa-

occasions, appealing to the Country, delivering them under terms of the greatest assurance; *Scio ego; cognosco ego; nos interfuimus, & oculis nostris aspeximus*: And in his *Retractions*, *Ea quæ cognoscimus neq; referre neq; enumerare possumus*.

Other Histories and Writings, and the Authors and Believers of them can pretend no higher than to the testimony of men, these have the testimony of God also: If we believe the testimony of men, the testimony of God is greater. I conclude therefore, that there is greater Reason to believe the History of the New Testament than any other History in the world.

The sum of all is this, The Divine Authority of the Scriptures is the great fundamental and comprehensive Principle of Christianity, which being admitted it stands, and being removed it presently falls to the ground,

Against this therefore the great Enemy of Religion in these later days (under pretence of Reason and Philosophy) directs his Forces, and is said
to

to have found a success very pernicious and deplorable.

I humbly conceive that the Resolution of the belief of the Divine Authority of the Scriptures into the Decrees of Popes, or Determinations of Councils with those who call themselves Roman-Catholicks, into private impulses and dictates of the Spirit with the Enthusiasts, and into the Laws and Edicts of Princes and Magistrates with our new pretenders to Reason and Philosophy, is that engine whereby the Devil hath prevailed to scandalize the world and cast it into Antiscriptural infidelity.

It is for this cause that I have conceived it requisite (after many others who have done worthily) to have recourse (once more) to the Original Reason of things, and the common grounds whereupon mankind doth proceed in matters of this nature. Vide Philosoph. Essay.

Where (hoping that I have escaped the absurdity of begging the matter in Question, discoursing in a circle, and the inconveniences of some other methods)

thods) I have endeavoured to demonstrate: That supposing the truth of the *New Testament*, both 1. The *Old Testament*, and 2. The *New Testament* are to be received as of *Divine Authority*.

3. And supposing *matters of fact* to be truly related, the *Doctrinal parts* are to be believed.

4. For the *Historical Relation* of *matters of fact*, that there is no ground to disbelieve it.

That for the *Reception* of it, it hath 1. All the *advantages* whereof an *History* is capable.

2. Far greater *advantages* than any other *History*.

Wherefore I conclude, that *All the Scriptures* (i. e. the *Canonical Books of the Old Testament* and the *Books of the New Testament*) were given by *inspiration of God*. Quod erat demonstrandum.

F I N I S.

de-
ath
he
Te-
Di-

to
rts

of
nd

th
Hi-

a-

All
cal
the
en
rat